

WASHINGTON – **Connecticut Senators Joe Lieberman and Richard Blumenthal and Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01)** announced Wednesday that the West Hartford Fire Department has been awarded a \$103,200 grant for Operations and Safety from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Assistance to Firefighters Grant program (AFG).

“Firefighters are crucial defenders of our safety and security,” **Lieberman** said. “Even in times such as these, when our nation’s wallet is stretched to its limit, we need to make smart investments and supporting our first responders certainly falls into that category.”

Blumenthal said: “These grants will go a long way in supporting Connecticut’s brave fire fighters in West Hartford by providing them with the necessary tools to keep our communities safe from fire-related hazards. First responders put their lives on the line each day, and we owe it to them to ensure that they are outfitted with the right tools and the proper safety equipment.”

“Just observing the yeoman’s effort last October during that terrible storm only serves as a reminder of how important our local fire departments are,” **Larson** said. “They are our friends, family and neighbors. They keep our homes and businesses safe. These brave individuals deserve the best equipment possible and I look forward to continuing to work with West Hartford Mayor Scott Slifka to give his department the tools needed so they can continue to do the fantastic work we have come to expect.”

Lieberman has a long history of advocating for fire safety. In 2000 and 2003, respectively, he was a cosponsor of the FIRE and SAFER Acts and on March 10, 2011, introduced the Fire Grant Reauthorization Act of 2011, legislation that reauthorizes the AFG and SAFER programs for five years. Since the FIRE and SAFER Acts were signed into law, FEMA has distributed 669 grants for a total of over \$76 million in Connecticut to help fire departments strengthen their response capabilities. Lieberman is also a Co-Chair of the Congressional Fire Caucus for the 112th Congress.

Blumenthal has fought to ensure the fair provision of survivor benefits to the spouses and families of police officers and firefighters who have been injured, or lost their lives, in the line of duty.

Larson, a strong supporter of first responders and their families, has sponsored a number of pieces of legislation to honor the men and women that serve their communities including, most recently, a bill to amend the U.S. law that would allow American Flags to fly at half mast to honor first responders who give their lives in the line of duty.

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